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ABSTRACT

This report attempts to show that there are effective programs, schools, and administrators, and many teachers who serve disadvantaged students well year in year out. The first part of the report focuses on such exemplary teachers through a survey of 59 teachers as reported by their principals. Characteristics of that model discussed relate to personality, relationships with peers, children, and parents and community, and the instructional guidelines followed. In the second part of the report are recorded the strategies felt most effective in helping poor and minority group children to learn as described by the teachers who were cited as exemplary by their principals. These relate to such issues as teacher and pupil expectations, pupil motivation, self concept, self esteem, goal achievement, physical environment, psychological and social environment, academic environment, and reading ability and programs thereof, and to "de-fusing" issues such as poverty, racism, bigotry, welfare, and abandonment. Letters from these teachers are reproduced with only minor alterations and deletions for conformity with style and usage. (RJ)

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ERIC/IRCD URBAN DISADVANTAGED SERIES

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THE EXEMPLARY TEACHER OF THE DISADVANTAGED: TWO VIEWS

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ERIC INFORMATION RETRIEVAL CENTER ON THE DISADVANTAGED
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SELECTED PRINCIPALS' PERCEPTIONS

OF EFFECTIVE TEACHERS OF THE DISADVANTAGED

From time to time books will burst on the horizon condemning the educational establishment for the under- or miseducation of poor children. Frequently these diatribes are written by individuals, usually male, who went into inner-city schools, found extremely deleterious circumstances, but were able to reach groups of children within the confines of their classrooms. After a year or two they detail their experiences in publications condemning society, the schools, the teacher education institutions, the administrators and most if not all of the other teachers. The implications are that the authors brought special human relations and instructional skills to the task of helping neglected children to learn and to like learning, skills which are lacking in professionally-trained personnel.

This paper will not dispute that there are enormous problems in society which tend to create the mass of "disadvantaged" children and youth, nor that much is lacking in many colleges, schools and classrooms when approaching the task of educating the child disenchanted with learning. That thesis has been well expounded by this author and by other staff members of the ERIC Information Retrieval Center on the Disadvantaged as well as by an army of lay people, government officials and professionals. This report is, instead, one of a series attempting to show that there are effective programs, schools, administrators, and many teachers who serve their students well year in and year out.

In 1970, Dr. Robert Coles, with the help of the Potomac Institute, Inc., published a soft cover book, Teachers and the Children of Poverty, presenting his perceptions of schools, teachers and children in thirteen cities in different parts of the country. Dr. Coles' skills as a social reporter plus photographs and children's drawings combine to provide an emotionally packed portrait of the hopes and despair, the failures and successes, the support and destruction experienced by the participants in those schools. On page 106 he says,

> Yet as mentioned earlier -- and again, mentioned to me by teachers many times in the course of the study -- if this report is to be useful to hundreds of school systems and thousands of teachers and ultimately millions of children, then its findings and its point of view somehow must be translated into a more pragmatic presentation, one that goes a step beyond the descriptive and analytic aspects of my work, one that, in other words, makes detailed and concrete recommendations to school systems all over the country, so that what has been observed by me, what has been observed as either extraordinary or unusual or particularly interesting, somehow can be regarded as at least potentially teachable -- teachable to school

> administrators and teachers and principals, the people who might be able to inspire in children much of the zeal and effectiveness and competence that now so many children lack, not because they inherently are doomed to lack those qualities of mind, but because certain possibilities or potentialities in them (possibilities and potentialities that most, if not all, children have) somehow are not brought to light and sustained by their world, of which teachers surely are a part.

In an effort to provide further "pragmatic presentation", to make "detailed and concrete recommendations to school systems" ... "teachable to school administrators, teachers and principals" a two-year project was designed. The first step which has been reported in a "Directory of Selected Ongoing Compensatory Education Programs" was to find school systems or projects which in the view of responsible evaluators could be considered successful or promising for educating their problem-burdened populations.

The next step was to identify the specific school unit within those projects which best fulfilled the objectives of the programs. Some minor difficulties were encountered here since some contact persons either did not know or were reluctant to designate one unit or school as being better than the others. In most cases, however, a straightforward and enthusiastic selection gave one the impression that the administrator here was probably successful in creating in his school a systematic approach to teaching and learning in which an atmosphere of warmth, hope and achievement prevailed.

Each principal was then asked to select his best teacher. Some objected to use of the term "best" since they were concerned about the implication for other staff members. For them the term "effective" was substituted. In some schools teams of two, three, and sometimes four teachers were selected. Each recommendation was accompanied by a statement of the criteria used and a description of the characteristics of the teachers.

We believe that human behavior can be changed. One way of stimulating change is by establishing models for emulation. Another is by suggesting specific techniques to be considered and possibly adapted after appropriate training. The principals' responses have provided both for study.

In process are two further reports -- a report by the teachers of the specific strategies they feel are effective and a report of observations by the author of several teachers in their classrooms.

The Model

Now let us take a look at this composite outstanding teacher of disadvantaged children as reported by their principals. Out of a total of 59 teachers 11 were men and 48 were women. For consistency, and in consideration of the majority, the feminine pronouns will be used except where direct quotations refer to a male teacher. Where a number appears in

brackets after a word or phrase, it designates the number of responses over one using those specific designations as reported by the first 30 respondents. Very little attempt has been made to consolidate like responses since it is felt that the different although overlapping adjectives give a fuller picture. No statements have been added by the author.

Personality

As a person, our model is a calm, warm [3], pleasant [3], sincere [4], courteous, patient [3], well-groomed person who has a sense of humor and at times is full of laughter [2]. She is friendly, affectionate [3], concerned [6], considerate [4], sympathetic [7], compassionate, and respectful of everyone.

Her enthusiasm [7] and commitment and dedication to the program [15], combined with consistency [6] and fairness are enhanced by flexibility [8], strength of mind and body [4], energy [2] and youthfulness [2]. She is never punitive yet can be firm [6] when necessary. Never losing her temper she is soft spoken, and makes you feel good about yourself by being sensitive to your needs [4]. She sells herself to students and peers.

Being highly intelligent and emotionally mature (3), she accepts responsibility for her own professional growth and development [9] and exemplifies both professional attitudes and activities [8]. Love for her job combined with conscientiousness, and positive attitudes [3] leads her to accept graciously suggestions by her superiors [2], to recover quickly from set-backs and frustrations, and to work hard both during and after school hours [8] or on weekends. Continuing education through the masters degree level and beyond [8] keeps these teachers in touch with evolving theory and practice.

Perhaps paramount among leadership qualities one finds that the outstanding teacher is articulate, stimulating [4], skillful, highly creative [5], enthusiastic, imaginative, innovative [10]. She knows what she is talking about [6], and knows how to teach. The three R's -- reliability [2], resourcefulness [3], and being realistic added to good judgment[3], organizing ability and outstanding communication skills round out the sketch.

Length of service was often mentioned as a factor since it brought familiarity with the program, community, children. A number of the selected teachers, however, were in their first five years of service. Grade levels represented ranged from pre-school classes to middle and junior high schools.

Relationships with Children

The good teacher loves children [5], evidencing a warm interest and concern [9] for them. This rapport [2] is partially based on a strong faith in children and their desire to learn [3]. Each child is understood [4], valued, and accepted as an individual [11].

Aware of the familial, cultural, motivational, educational and environmental forces which influence a child's behavior, the teacher identifies with and becomes involved with her students [3]. Using common sense psychology and separating her own emotional needs from children's needs, the teacher displays unique capacity to develop and evaluate alternative behaviors for herself and her students.

The relationships established frequently carry over for several and sometimes many years after the children have left her classroom.

In one instance special note was made of the fact that the teacher, although white, had earned the deep respect of the black students and his black peers, who constituted a majority in that school.

Relationships with Peers

Arising out of sympathetic understanding of other teachers' problems the teachers selected displayed the ability to achieve mutually satisfactory relationships with fellow educators [14], to provide examples for other teachers of the most effective and positive educational practices [5]. Often they are called on to lead inservice workshops [2], do demonstration teaching [4], supervise student teachers [2], act as consultants[5] and program assistants. There is repeated call on these teachers to participate in school and system-wide committees and workshops [6]. Relationships with aides afford direct, positive leadership through support, explicit directions and needed materials.

Relationships With Parents and Community

The model teacher has deep respect for parents and community members [15]. She evidences willingness to effectively communicate details about programs and about the children. This generates respect, admiration and affection for the teacher [3]. She also involves parents in their children's education [6]. Community members are used as resources both in the classroom and in the neighborhood.

Instructional Guidelines

In outlining what the teacher does as reported by the principals, the exact phrases used in some statements have been used or paraphrased. Quotation marks have been eliminated for simplification in the text, except for long direct quotations.

There were numerous indications that isolation of the teacher was on the way out. Almost without exception there were groups of professionals taking joint responsibility for groups of classes and for professional activities. This, at times, took the form of traditional team teaching, but more often was differently structured, based on a modified self-contained classroom.

Lesson-planning was superior, regular, detailed and effective [13]. The teacher had clear ideas about goals toward which to work and planned for those objectives [9]. However, strategies were shifted when indicated [9]. Those plans were implemented by creating a wholesome, rich, stimulating, attractive, dynamic learning environment in which children were eager to learn [14]. Learning is made interesting, challenging and delightful [6]. These teachers seek and use the right approach to maximize academic and social benefits for each child and all children, helping each child work at his own pace [18].

In order to accomplish this the teacher understands and accommodates differing learning styles [9] and differing needs [8]. She sees the good in every child. Understanding and using learning theory, educational sociology and cultural anthropology [5] she constantly interacts with the class, doing little sit-down teaching [3].

Trying new techniques [5], including use of media [3], she is a skilled classroom manager [4]. Using diagnostic and prescriptive teaching [3], small doses of instruction are designed and offered so that children absorb better without taxing their attention spans [3]. Provision is made for varied repetition of work so that children gain firmer mastery of concepts. In order to achieve this the teacher must have a thorough grasp of subject matter in addition to wide, general knowledge so that she becomes a rich resource for information [8]. Curriculum expertise, including assessment, remediation and experimentation [4] shifts the emphasis from the past to the present world and the needs of the child in the future [3].

High academic expectations are established demanding the best from each student [7], sometimes using criterion teaching to achieve 100% effectiveness and continual acceleration of learning [8].

The loosely-structured, highly-individualized classroom in which enriching pupil-to-pupil contact occurs permits children to move about freely, most often occupied by worth-while tasks. In fact, in these classes one often finds children singing to themselves or gleefully congratulating themselves on discovering an idea, a way of solving a problem or completing a task [6]. This atmosphere is accomplished by

a) allowing each child to participate in planning his learning [5]
b) helping each child develop responsibility for his own work and behavior [6]
c) helping each child develop attitudes of caring for and helping others [3]
d) prompting each child toward a positive self image and building a success identity by belief in self [9]
e) training each child in careful organization of his time and activities [3]
f) stimulating all the senses of the children to enhance learning.

This teacher develops new materials and uses commerical materials judiciously [6], adjusting them to the needs of her students rather than following them slavishly.

There is emphasis on reading skills [4] with an experience approach [2] using pre- and post-tests routinely to weekly gauge the progress of every student.

These teachers often have asked for service in inner-city schools and bring special talents such as linguistic tools, being able to instruct bilingual students in their mother tongue. One such teacher was reported as being talented in music, playing the piano and organ and being an astronomer, ceramist, naturalist and painter!

We know that all teachers need not have all these talents, and indeed no teacher can have all the characteristics described above since teachers are human beings with both strengths and weaknesses. Working under pressure they do at times lose their tempers, but even under these circumstances they protect their students from the damaging consequences of their temporary indisposition.

Commentary

Speaking of a team of two teachers of a 1st and 2nd grade class, the principal wrote, "when one walks into this classroom he is awed by the truly self-directiveness of little children and by the smoothness with which the teachers operate." Not every teacher today of poor children is prepared to function that way. If some can, so can others. We must at least try.

The historic teacher shortage of the last several decades has been eradicated by the evolving birth rate spiral. The excuse that an incompetent "warm body" in the classroom was better than none never was justifiable and no longer applies. With the anticipation of an excess of several hundred thousand teachers in the next few years, each group of students, including minority group and poor children, must be provided a teacher who at least approximates if not exceeds the model outlined in this document.

One can hardly be surprised at the description of the model teacher since it is assumed that to be successful she would of necessity be a fine human being. The qualities indicated are essential to practitioners in all human services. They are critically needed for teachers working with disadvantaged students. We were surprised however at the calibre of response and the extent of non-response from the principals.

One cannot contest the fact that heads of schools or programs are very busy people but professionalism carries with it the need to extend oneself for the advancement of the field. The principals contacted were not a random sample. They had been selected as exemplary. How then explain that over half the group did not respond at all and half of the respondents replied in a casual, superficial manner? Could this be interpreted to mean that a large segment of principals find it a difficult task to define the criteria by which teacher performance should be judged? Can the even fewer responses which described in some detail the nature of the instructional process which appeared to succeed be construed to indicate that many principals do not spend sufficient time observing and even participating in classroom activities? Have the instructional heads of our schools become so involved with paper work, politics and disciplinary control that the heart of their task has been neglected? These questions are not theoretical. They reflect the outcome of years of observation and much research.

Fortunately, however, there are exceptions to this depressing picture. A select group of respondents presented thoughtful analyses which resulted in the reinforcing insights summarized in the section on instructional guidelines. The response of Ms. Elisabeth Chubbs, Program Coordinator of the Motivation Center Program in Youngstown, Ohio, is an excellent example.

"The criteria I used in my selection as well as the characteristics that mark this gentleman as an outstanding teacher are listed below:

A. In relation to children:
1. Love of children.
2. Faith in them and their desire to learn.
3. Ability to accept and understand each child as an individual.
4. Willingness to seek and then use the right approach to maximize the academic and social benefits for each child.
5. Ability to help each child move at his own pace.
6. Ability to help each child develop responsibility for his own work and behavior.
7. Ability to help children develop an attitude of helping and caring for others.
8. Ability to build a success identity for each child.
9. Ability to provide problem-solving learning experiences for each child.
10. Create rich, stimulating classroom environment.
11. Patience and sense of humor.
12. Willingness to allow each child to participate in planning his learning.

B. In relation to his profession:
1. Thorough grasp of subject matter.
2. Possession of wide general knowledge.
3. Willingness to constantly seek self improvement.
4. Ability to understand and willingness to implement new and innovative approaches to education.
5. Gracious acceptance of suggestions by his supervisor.

C. In relation to colleagues, parents and community;
1. Ability to achieve a mutually satisfactory relationship with his fellow educators.
2. Respect for and willingness to communicate with the parents.
3. Ability to involve parents in the education of their children.
4. Ability to earn the respect of parents, community, and colleagues in his role as educator.
5. Ability to provide an example for other teachers of the most effective and positive educational practices."

Another exemplary response came from Ms. Frances Vargos, Project Director of Title VII of the Del Valle, Texas Bilingual Program.

"My recommendation as our most effective teacher over a four-year time span is one who has been with the program since its beginning. She has taught second, first, and kindergarten levels. She possesses the following attributes which have contributed to the success of the bilingual program:

1. She is a native speaker of Spanish and thoroughly trained in her native language. (B.A. + graduate hours). She is equally competent in her second language, English.
2. She attended a bilingual workshop which oriented her to the basic concepts of bilingual education.
3. She was trained as a secondary foreign language teacher and became knowledgeable in audio-lingual techniques necessary for an effective bilingual teacher in presenting content material to first and second language learners in two languages. She gradually took hours required for certification as an elementary school teacher (18 hours) in the State of Texas. She has gone the second mile in attending workshops and participating in in-service and pre-service workshops.
4. Having grown up in Laredo, Texas, she has great empathy for the so-called "disadvantaged" Mexican-American child. Her empathy is not expressed in bitterness or militancy, but is manifested as a positive, humane quest for simple justice for all people.
5. Her horizons are toward human beings around the world. Her vision is not limited to one culture nor can she tolerate a belief that one culture or language is superior to another.
6. She is intelligent and vitally interested in people. This interest and enthusiasm is conveyed to the children.
7. She is an actress and has a flair for drama. This attribute gives her classes an aura of excitement. She can enable any child to learn, such is her effusive spirit. At the same time there is order and discipline in her room.
8. She is organized in her preparation of materials and understands the process of sequenced learning.
9. She realizes that bilingual teaching inherently involves constant assessment of the language development of the child.
10. She is creative both in designing and writing her own classroom materials.
11. No one could ever persuade her that a child in her class does not have the capacity to learn. She is a teacher who searches to find a way of reaching every child on his own terms."

The blueprint is clear. Many teachers fitting these descriptions are presently working with poor children in our schools. May their tribe increase!

Appreciation is expressed to the principals or directors who cooperated in this study. They are listed alphabetically by name within the states.

California
Don Baughman, Modesto
Ralph Cogdon, Sacramento
Sylvia Coop, Venice
Wilma Gardner, Los Angeles
Frank M. Goodman, Compton
Kathryn E. Herrmann, Compton
Mildred T. Matthews, Los Angeles

Delaware
R. W. Sauer, Wilmington
Peggy Stivers, Dover

District of Columbia
Gilbert A. Diggs
John D. Howard
Emma Smart

Georgia
Wilbur T. Leaphart, Atlanta
Marion Thompson, Atlanta

Kentucky
Donald R. Alwest, Sr., Louisville

Massachusetts
Joseph M. Utka, West Newton
Donald T. Welch, Newton Upper Falls

Michigan
Barbara Birch, Detroit

Missouri
Shirley Deavens, St. Louis

Montana
Ray Beck, Great Falls

New Jersey
Bertram Trachtenberg, Newark

New Mexico
Margaret M. Aragon, Las Vegas
Don E. Herron, Tucumcari

New York
Helen E. Besaw, St. Regis Falls
Joan C. Downey, Buffalo
Murray A. Goldberg, New York City
Sanford Grossman, Ellenville
Angela Scotto, Yonkers

North Carolina
Kirby L. Hamilton, Goldsboro

Ohio
Elisabeth L. Chubbs, Youngstown
Cora Fitch, Cincinnati

Oregon
Walter Burgess, Eugene
David McCrea, Portland

Pennsylvania
Frank M. Durkee, Harrisburg
Betty B. Schantz, Philadelphia
Florence H. Scott, Philadelphia
John Welsh, Philadelphia

Texas
Loquita Gibbens, Karnes City
Fae Lysiak, Fort Worth
Frances Vargos, DelValle

Washington
Nancy Van Ansdil, Seattle

THE VOICE OF THE TURTLE IS HEARD:
TEACHERS' STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING
EDUCATION OF THE DISADVANTAGED

Introduction

The voice of the turtle is heard...

There are two interpretations usually given to the above quotation. The first referring to the Bible implies the revitalization of life which takes place as the cooing of the turtle-dove introduces spring. The second, dramatizing the fact that the turtle has no voice audible to humans, indicates that at last the thoughts and feelings of those who seldom, if ever, have an opportunity to share their thinking publicly are now given this opportunity. Both of these interpretations express the purposes and motive of this paper.

The teachers described in the companion piece "Selected Principals' Perceptions of Effective Teachers of the Disadvantaged" were asked to describe the strategies they felt were most effective in helping poor and minority group children to learn and to love to learn. Specifically they were asked to describe what they said and did which seemed to make a difference. It is felt that these verbatim statements, coming as they do from a varied group of teachers working in diverse situations could serve as stimuli and guide-lines for others searching to improve the instruction in other schools. The letters which follow are reproduced with only minor deletions of extraneous material and editing for style and usage.

... attitudes are the hardest things to change ....
Charlean P. Haywood, District of Columbia

This is not an easy letter to write. Yours is not an easy request to fill: "... share some of the strategies ..." and give "... a detailed report about the things you say and do which ... are crucial in your success in effecting the learning of poor and minority group children." These are such difficult items to pinpoint that I doubt that any blueprint for success can be drawn from cold facts of what is done or said by a teacher. This is just my opinion and studies and research probably do not support me, so here goes:

First, and most important in teaching any children, "different" children specifically, is the teacher's attitude toward the group from which the children come. Since attitudes are the hardest things to change, I might be considered lucky in that I began with a headstart, having been born into a poor and minority group family. Thus, I know first hand that the teacher's attitude toward the child is tremendously important. The child wants and needs to be regarded and treated as though he has some worth. He wants and needs to be accepted for what he is and not for what the teacher wants him to be.

As to what I do and say --. I am variously gentle, tough, kind, firm, pleasant, angry, warm, and frustrated. And that is what I mean by not being able to draw a blueprint for the effective teacher. There is the teacher's manner, tone of voice, and general personality which cannot be expressed in words but which have much to do with her success or failure in the classroom.

I try to establish a friendship with my class that says "I don't want to run and play with you on the playground but I am human and I laugh and hurt like you. To show my human side, I sometimes do not hide my human failings. I readily admit to them that I don't know everything and ask for their explanations of problems and subjects that they can explain to me. I try to relate to my class. I sometimes tell something funny about my having been poor "down in the country."

Throughout all this, I maintain dignity and respect between my class and me. I am as courteous and polite, kind and understanding to my class as I hope they will be to me. When a child cannot answer some question and shows that he feels very bad about it, often I take that opportunity to say, "I'm really glad somebody didn't know the answer. You aren't supposed to know everything! If you did, I wouldn't have a job."

I praise children a lot. One teacher said to me after a lesson that she had no idea that her children were so smart.

If the teacher tells me that a particular child is slow, I give the class an easy question or task, generally remarking that this is pretty hard and I don't expect too many children to do it. Then, I call on the "slow" child to answer just to let him prove to himself and to the class that he does know something.

I've made it a rule never to say disparaging things about a child's family, homelife, race, or religion (or lack of it) -- neither to him nor to anyone else in his presence. (And, if I can see the child, I consider him present!) Children, contrary to what some people apparently believe, are neither deaf nor insensitive and are particularly vulnerable in those four areas.

The foregoing statements are strategies for establishing a working relationship with children. In conjunction with working with the child in school, I try to get to know as many parents as possible. (Easy for me; I live in my school neighborhood.) Being able to say, "I know your mother and know that she does not realize that you are wasting your time and hers in school," or "I will go home with you at 3 and talk with your mother about your behavior today," can have a tremendous impact. If you know and show respect for a child's parents (or mother) you "have it made" with the child, generally speaking. Even for children whose parents I do not know, I've found that children want the teacher to believe that their parents do not approve of poor conduct. I visit homes and have found that, contrary to common belief, mothers are happy to see the teacher. Especially if the teacher visits before the problem gets out of hand. Children respond exceedingly well if you can say, "I know you mother," and I have never met an irate, uncooperative mother.

Mr. Kornhauser, our director, gave us a motto: "Teach every child as though she were your daughter. Teach every boy as though he were your son." In my own experience, I have extended this to: Teach each child as you would want your own child taught -- by someone else.

I hope that you can get something of value from this letter. As I re-read it, I see that I have concentrated on only one aspect of the teacher's role and have not really told you what I do to make my program a success. So, as a final statement, let me say that it is my belief and it is my opinion that many of the "do's" and "don'ts" of teaching become unimportant if there is mutual respect between the child and his teacher. By the same token, the best lesson material is meaningless if mutual respect is absent.

...The Language Arts Program is carried out in D.C. by a corps of twenty-one Language Arts Teachers, of which I am one. Also, I am enclosing a copy of the Language Arts Reading Support Wheel which gives the bases of our lessons.

The design of the original Language Arts Project gave no responsibility to us for teaching developmental reading skills. In our job we emphasize the other three language arts: listening, speaking, and writing. We use a variety of instructional aids, materials, and references in our lessons. These include a multiplicity of both print and non-print items and we present the skills through work in the vital subject fields of mathematics, science, history, geography, art, music, and physical education as well as through literature and other facets of the language arts.

Language arts teachers are urged to accept responsibility for the following:

1. Providing a stimulating climate for learning which will foster the development of desirable and appropriate language skills.
2. Accepting, understanding, and respecting all children and the language which they bring to school.
3. Refining, enhancing, and enriching the language skills which pupils bring from home, using them as a base for building efficiency and skill in reading and writing and in the use of the standard dialect.

The program's main thrust is to intensify language learnings and experiences in grades kindergarten through sixth for boys and girls handicapped by limited ability to communicate in the standard dialect. Its primary purpose is to develop oral and written language facility and the comprehension skills, areas in which children from low-income neighborhoods reveal a severe deficit, one which tends to impede academic progress and a satisfactory school adjustment, both immediate and long-range.

Reading Support Wheel

Prepared by the teachers in the Language Arts Project, Washington, D. C. and used as a guide for instruction.

... "Pots of Gold" around every corner ....

Lois Steeg, New York City

Preface

It is a truism that every teacher works differently from every other, and differently with every child. The author of this report feels, however, that there are certain common denominators, and that these must support any successful program of education, particularly as regards poor, minority group or disadvantaged children.

They are implicit in the report on the following pages. They are these:

1. That every child must be encouraged to believe that he or she is first an individual, a member of a family; that the family is a unit in a neighborhood; that a neighborhood is a section of a community; that a community is a part of a country; and that a country is one of a number which together make up the family of man.

2. That various sub-cultures and sub-groups, each with their own quality, flavor and characteristics, exist within these concentric circles, and should be understood and taught as well as the above.

3. That for a truly proper understanding of what is needed to educate "special situation" children, there must be a lessening of the distance between the top of the bureaucratic pyramid and those working on the ground floor.

What Do I Expect From The Child?

I expect the child to want to grow to his fullest potential. I feel it is my task to encourage the child to want to do this, by making him secure, and proud of himself and his cultural heritage and aware that though his individuality is unique, it is lots of individuals operating together which make up families, groups, communities, and cultures.

I expect him to be somewhat insular and cautious in the beginning; that is the challenge. But I also expect him to react to whatever stimuli I can bring to bear to show him the greater opportunities the environment offers for those who are not afraid to experiment and take chances.

What Do I Want the Child to Expect from Me?

Honesty. If the child learns to trust one person, then all goals are attainable. My teaching is based on the needs of the child. When I diagnose I must consider

achievement level, special assets and liabilities, special interests, capabilities and talents, background strengths and weaknesses, level of understanding, compassion, self-awareness, consideration, relationships with adults, and his security among his peers, his family and his environment. If I can bring the child to know himself, and not be fearful, then he will come to know the world.

How Do I Motivate the Child?

I feel they must be exposed to experiences of "childhood." Television and other stimuli act sometimes to make these children blasé or indifferent. To counteract this, I seek ideas from them, and often teach outside the basic curriculum to develop the spirit and joy of learning. Often I will use the outside stimuli, if I see I can get across a point. Also, I expose them to every variety of learning experience possible. I invite guests, or take them to varied activities as frequently as possible. The goal here is exposure: the more they see and experience, the more they will want to know.

How Do I Teach Them to Work Together?

It is my belief that these children are happy working within a framework of discipline, and goals we've set up. They begin by working as a class, and gradually they learn the rules for group work. Eventually, they accept working together in committees, and hopefully, alone, with or without me. The goal here is autonomy.

Many responsibilities and activities are provided daily to allow this, such as;

- Labs (ie. in Math and Science and Language Arts)
- Projects (currently Science and Music)
- Parties (Committees are rotated)
- Jobs (Daily responsibilities)
- Creative Activities (Currently a Year Book, Poetry)
- Sharing (which we do for every occasion)

As a reinforcement, we conduct evaluation among ourselves, sometimes very critically.

How Do I Get Around or "De-fuse" Issues Like Poverty, Welfare, Bigotry, Racism, Abandonment?

We discuss problems openly, answering all questions and making analogies with everything we study. We do role-playing, or fables (and I'm currently reading them Jayne Eyre) to illustrate feelings, or dreams, as well as discussing family problems such as divorce or abandonment.

Here again, I must seize the opportunity when it arises, to discuss problems. Also I keep my ears open to anticipate trouble spots, and I am always equitable with them. Whenever and wherever possible, I meet or call parents to discuss the child's home situation and to pick up whatever tips might be useful.

How Do I Go About Demonstrating Their Place in the Family, Neighborhood, Community, Country, World?

Each child is taught that he has a responsibility to his class and class mates. He is answerable to himself, but must also depend on others to achieve all together a smooth running life in school. This, of course, helps me toward the autonomy I want; but more, it is a step toward their independence and self confidence. They become more aware of what responsibility means and they enjoy assuming it.

Hopefully, the understanding they come to in class of working with others, of the rights of individuals, of democratic procedures, and of justice and fair play, will stand them in good stead in the world outside the classroom.

What Activities Do I Plan to Achieve My Goals?

The activities are as vast and varied as Assemblies in Spanish to a Year Book containing each child's likes and dislikes with photos and poems by classmates. Whatever can create a learning experience is a valid activity. I plan long term activities such as : growth in reading, social studies year long booklets and projects, math goals with "pots of gold" around every corner, science projects covering appreciation of living things, as well as all other areas in the syllabus, and questions and open answers we will hopefully be able to answer after a year's study. I plan short term monthly projects such as Mystery Month, Vitamins and Nutrition Project, Drugs and Narcotics Project, Ecology Project, Economic Project which involves living on a budget, Spanish language club in class, Science Fair. The goals here must be gratifying in the short term as well as stretching for the long term ideals. Some children can not wait.

Some of the Ways We Share Reading Experiences

Written Book Reports
Illustrated Book Reports
Stick Figure Puppets
Diorama Book Reports
Review of the book, making comparisons
Descriptive sentences and phrases
Biographical Book - Learn quote
Write a letter to the author
Poetic tribute
Write a play and do it with friends
"Character Day" in the whole class
Interclass exchange
Write a different ending
Ask questions to give others
Categorize by subject area
Keep "Books I've Read" Wheel
Read other books by the same author and make a collection of poems by poet you like.

How Do I Test Myself As to How Well I'm Achieving My Goals

We have conferences, class discussions and class meetings. I keep records with them. I praise them and extol strengths. I test them weekly so test-taking becomes automatic, and they look forward to being in the 100% club for academic achievement. I observe their interaction with each other and with adults to see if they are improving socially and becoming independent thinkers.

What Qualities Do I Most Want To See in Them at the End of the Year?

A comfortable, relaxed, self confidence; a self assurance based on ability, or capability of knowing how to find out; a definite consciousness of right and wrong; a strong patriotic feeling; a responsible place in a family; an eagerness to continue school; a willingness to accept strengths and weaknesses in others; and to understand that they can change if they want to.

. . . . .

...Don't do for the child what he can do for himself ....

Marcia J. Rohe, Cincinnati, Ohio

First of all, my background, in brief. I am twenty-eight years old, am married and have a five year old son. Last year was my first year as a kindergarten teacher. Previously I taught one year in a fifth grade classroom. In 1969 I returned to College to get a M. Ed. and certification for teaching kindergarten. My prime educational interest lies in early childhood education as I have always enjoyed small children and I deeply feel these early years to be extremely crucial in any child's total development.

Last year, 1970-71, there were thirty-one children in my classroom. I was extremely fortunate to have a marvelous full time teacher assistant, Ms. Mamie O'Neal, who herself is a mother of eleven children. When I refer to "we" in this letter I am referring to Ms. O'Neal and myself and I do so because I feel we worked as a team in fulfilling the objectives of the program.

Our kindergarten is an all day program. The children remain at school for a full day's program including lunch, rest and snacks. In developing our program we relied heavily on the Sullivan Readiness Program, Frostig's body development program and Lavatelli's "Early Childhood Curriculum". This year we hope to include First Talking Alphabet and the Peabody Kit. We are also using several learning games which I have personally developed.

Along with our prepared materials we have found it very rewarding to participate in monthly All Day Kindergarten Workshops and have frequently sought the advice and

suggestions from our principal, Ms. Cora Fitch, our supervisor, Ms. Audrey Dick, and other teachers as well. All have been most helpful and cooperative.

Perhaps it would be easiest to briefly list the strategies which we have used in dealing with our children.

1. We have always tried each day to greet each child individually as he arrives at school and to chat with him if he wishes. We also say "good-bye" at the end of the day to each child personally.

2. We have tried to understand each child as an individual and have tried to meet his needs -- always keeping in mind that each child needs to experience much success.

3. We develop our program according to the children's needs and desires. It seems our children lack conversational skills, yet have a great deal to tell us, so we devote a portion of each day to sharing and conversation -- always encouraging those who are less willing to share ideas.

4. We tried to show our love for each child and to be patient with all, especially those who demand more time and help.

5. We feel that parents can be a tremendous asset and have tried to involve them as much as possible. We send out monthly newsletters informing parents of our goals and objectives for the month and asking them to work with their child at home and to help out in the classroom if they can.

6. We have used many ways to help a child develop a good self-concept. One way which has been successful is celebrating each child's birthday -- displaying his picture on our calendar and involving the child's family in our celebrations.

   Picture taking is another good method -- the children enjoy taking pictures of each other and seeing themselves and friends in print.

7. We avoid showing partiality and having favorites by keeping records of what each child has done and have a daily helpers chart which involves the children in every aspect of the program. This way we are sure that every child gets a turn to perform every duty -- thus developing responsibility and competence.

8. Our motton seems to be: "Don't do for the child what he can do for himself." We never redo or "polish up" a child's work but praise him for a job well done (if we feel that he has truly tried). If a child is lazy about his work or in performing certain duties, we try to show him there is a better way.

9. Frequent rewards and praise are a must. We try always to be positive and usually employ gimmicky incentives, such as smile faces and other things that appeal to the children.

10. We emphasize listening skills and the ability to follow directions. We play many games which help develop these skills in a fun way.

11. We use all sorts of materials and games to develop audio and visual discrimination. We emphasize following directions and try to gear our materials so that they promote the habit of left to right progression.

. . . . .

... language holds the total school program together ....
Judith M. Adams, Buffalo, New York

Although my personal philosophy favors an unstructured program, I feel that in a compensatory program for disadvantaged children, some structure must be incorporated to assure the development of necessary skills. Therefore, I try to combine the best features of both approaches to provide a good program for the children.

My goal is to provide a stimulus-rich environment and exposure to a wide variety of experiences. Hopefully, the program provides the children with adult models to imitate, improves their self-concepts, promotes the use of language, develops new interests and helps children to learn to live with each other.

Some factors that I consider extremely important to the success of the program are:

1) Limited class size -- a class may have no more than 15 or 18 children, depending on the size of the room
2) Two adults in each room (teacher and aide)
3) A highly organized program of parent involvement
4) Resource personnel -- home-school coordinator, community aides, supervisor, psychologist, nurse.
5) Quality and quantity of materials and equipment.

I feel that good programs for young children should be language-centered. Language is not an activity or a subject to be specifically taught (although some structured activities may be used at times), but rather, language holds the total school program together. I find the following points to be extremely important to the development of language competency:

1) There should be back and forth interaction between the teacher and child, not a monologue on the teacher's part.

2) Teachers should be careful not to do most of the talking.
3) Whenever possible, questions should be open rather than close-ended.
4) Children should be encouraged to engage the teacher in conversation.
5) Teacher must really listen to children.
6) The teacher should take care to use accurate, precise and complete sentences so that her language will serve as a model.
7) Pat phrases or standard responses by the teacher should be avoided.
8) Many activities which encourage or necessitate the use of language should be provided (such as puppets, dramatic play, word games, etc.)
9) The atmosphere should be conducive to conversation, that is, there should be a maximum chance for children to converse with each other.
10) In order to make teacher-child communication truly effective, there must be an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect.

. . . . .

...ignoring the "bad" and rewarding the "good" ....
Richard Baehler, Youngstown, Ohio

I have divided this synopsis into physical, psychological, social and academic environments which, in the main, cover the total spectrum of the milieu we try to provide for our youngsters.

1. Physical Environment

We seek to make the physical setting as interesting and inspiring as possible. As the student enters the room, he is immediately impressed by its stimulating, rich, and colorful appearance. He sees eighteen bean stalks growing into the "sky" with the giant's castle and the goose who laid the golden egg. As each child completes his chosen tasks and/or does something kind and considerate, he is allowed to add a leaf labeled as to task or deed to his Jack and the Beanstalk vine. Nearly every foot of wall space, including the window blinds, are covered with colorful chalk drawings, friezes, collages, charts, posters, maps, language experience stories and drawings, all made by the children.

Activity and interest centers or stations with interesting, provocative equipment such as models, specimens, electric equipment, magnetic equipment, rock samples, silkworm cocoons, etc., are to be seen in every corner. A profile of each child with his name below cut out by himself plus his hand prints, and in some cases his foot prints, are on display. Along with gaily decorated books, rugs, chairs and carrels are in the storybook corner. Children may read for pleasure or information, engage in a research project, or just browse. Wires are strung across the room above the children's heads from which hang the signs identifying the sections of the room as well as displaying children's work. In the "funland" corner, the students find all kinds of educational as well as "fun" games. Puzzles in the

process of completion are also out. This area is in use most of the time by those children who have earned bonus coupons for appropriate behavior and acceptable work and, in addition, have chosen to use these coupons in funland.

The front third of the room is kept available for Glasser's classroom meetings and filmstrip viewing by the entire group. An aquarium bubbles in the science area and materials are available for scientific experiments. In the arithmetic corner, a small table, 2' x 6', covered with math materials, is surrounded by eight desks. Measurement devices, rulers, yardsticks, quart and pint containers, etc., are available for the children's use. Arithmetic exploration is common to all number math activities. Because of blackboard availability, language experience exercises are conducted in this area as well. The children are allowed free movement within the confines of consideration of others and free talking under the same rule. The children often move their desks or chairs together in order to work as a team or group.

II. Psychological and Social Environment

We strive through the provision of numerous success experiences to enhance the principle that learning should be pleasurable to be most effective. And, secondly, an example of a loving, caring teacher who demonstrates this in every word and deed is basic to a favorable learning environment.

When each child enters our room, he takes his day's diary form from a packet thumbtacked on the door. I make certain that each child is greeted by name and normally make an intimate remark regarding his appearance, carriage, etc. The student immediately moves to his assigned task, such as removing the equipment from cabinets and preparing same for use, or the student may move to a chair in our circle and prepare his plan for the day. When all children are ready for our Glasser circle meeting I may begin by asking "Did anything pleasurable or joyful happen to you since yesterday?" Or, "Did anyone encounter a problem since yesterday?" Perhaps a child may bring up some topic for discussion, but normally all topics are of immediate rather than deferred concern. We encourage each person to address all other persons by name. I attempt to keep a mental survey of the number of times a child's name is mentioned, making certain that each child's name is mentioned at least once by another child. This classroom meeting often takes the framework of Exploring Moral Values. No child's comments or contributions are ever belittled or demeaned. Our primary objective in this exercise is to develop self image and positive attitudes and a feeling of personal worth as well as a feeling of success. Notes are sent home as frequently as possible to parents relating only positive things about the child's academic and/or social growth. For many of these children, this is the first time this has ever happened to them.

In all classroom experiences, we use positive reinforcement techniques as per Dr. Ralph Blackwood of Akron State University. We are sincere in ignoring the "bad" and rewarding the "good". We try to find ways of switching the payoff for bad behavior to good behavior and good work. We do a lot of joking and kidding, laughing and having fun

together. When some one succeeds with a difficult problem or constructs an especially good sentence, I'll hold out my hand to shake his hand and say, "Take five." Or I may say "Aren't we proud of Joey's work. Let's give him a hand," and we all clap. On the diary form, a "feelings" section is included. A child can mark "down" or "up" depending on his mood and the reason for same. At the end of the day, my aides and I spread these out on the table and go over them checking what we have done to make the children feel good about themselves and their work and what we may have done to make them feel bad. This helps us set up a kind of contingency management that brings about better positive reinforcement techniques. Each child is held accountable for what he puts down on his diary form as his commitment for the day which may include any chores he wishes to do. They recieve bonus tickets for fulfilling their responsibilities. These then may be turned in for a number of "payoffs" or rewards which the children choose themselves -- such as running errands, time at the game table, extra time to read or work on art, an opportunity to play or work with a friend, etc. I trust children with many responsibilities in the classroom that they are normally not permitted to do in an ordinary classroom. I watch them surreptitiously, but they are on their own when running the filmstrip projector, caring for the fish, etc. In this way, they learn responsibility and accountability. But, perhaps of commeasurable significance, they learn good work habits.

III. Academic Environment

We emphasize four academic areas. Communications -- the receiving and expressing of ideas -- numbers or math, science, and social studies.

(a) Communication -- an individualized approach is used where the children have a choice between Barnell-Loft, Readers' Digest, S.R.A., Modern Curriculum Press, Language Experience, and reading library books for pleasure. The language experience approach, a la Roach Van Allen, is not only available for building a child's ability to read by first enabling him to communicate orally, but these same language experience stories as created by the group or an individual are then used as a basis for their spelling, study of grammar, vocabulary building, etc.

(b) Math -- students work at their own pace. Pre-testing indicates where each child is and what precise skills each child needs. The aides and I work with small groups and individual children around the room. Quite often, older students help the younger ones. Generally, the students develop their own problems, and then solve each other's problems. An abacus, puzzles, equations, number blocks, records, geometic figures, measurement equipment are all used as well as a wide variety of number or math games. The children especially enjoy the magnetic number board.

(c) Science -- in science children are encouraged to conduct actual experiments using the equipment available and bringing things in from home. Sometimes one or two children demonstrate for the group and sometimes the whole group will do some experiment together. Often this is correlated with language

experience. We also use a number of science filmstrips for discussion, art work, and language experience work.

(d) Social Studies -- Social studies at present is generally done through filmstrips and many large picture sets. We have a very comprehensive Black History program developed by a local black sorority at Youngstown State University. My two black aides have assumed the responsibility for teaching this material. We did a unit of Ohio History on which several large chalk drawings were done. Music of other lands and other cultures is brought in by the aides and myself.

I must not fail to mention, since the following all involves long range benefits to each child, three other facets of my daily activities.

(1) Our guidelines call for returning each child to his homeroom on a gradual basis as he seems, in the judgment of myself, the psychologist, and the principal, to be sufficiently rehabilitated, attitudinally and academically. This often requires convincing the student that he is ready to try his wings back in his homeroom and convincing the homeroom teacher that he should accept this child on a gradual basis, a subject at a time. The foregoing means establishing a good working relationship through many conferences with the rest of the staff so that each child, when ready, will be given a fair chance. Sometimes this process may also mean a home call to acquaint parents with upcoming developments.

(2) I work closely with our psychologist in determining for each child starting points, placing, and time of return to the homeroom. He and I also discuss various techniques to use with different children in order to maximize scholastic and social benefits for each child.

(3) I'm fortunate in having two very conscientious, hard working aides who have been willing to study to improve both their academic background as well as sound psychological principles to use in working with children. I try to guide them carefully as they work with the children.

In conclusion, I observe that today's youth recognize that:
(1) learning is important
(2) learning must be relevant
(3) students have inalienable rights
(4) students are important because T.V. and all others say so save some traditional teachers.

... any and all attention getting mechanisms ....
Bradley Bethel, Louisville, Kentucky

The successes we have had here at Re-Ed School working with poor, minority, or disadvantaged children are due largely to our willingtness to investigate and try all approaches suggested to us and to initiate new ones of our own. We have liberally borrowed ideas, tried them here, dropped those that did not work for us and retained those that did.

The original base of approach was a keen and abiding curiosity about how best to initiate a re- education prgoram with all important aspects focused on the child. We have not hesitated to innovate, to change, to be unorthodox.

Since you requested specific information, we are attaching a numerical list. Each listing is in two parts; the first represents the child's traits, problems, or needs. The second represents our corrective action.

1. A Generally Low Energy Level
In a residential setting, provide three balanced-diet meals a day; counsel parents to follow through on weekends.

2. Lack of Mental Vigor
Raise stimulation level; ask questions; prod mentally; challenge him.

3. Lack of Intellectual Curiosity
Confront the child with problems and demand reaction; pitch activities at appropriate difficulty levels; relate to experiential background.

4. Lack of Self-Assurance
Build confidence by arranging situations where success is assured; nourish egos; compliment; be sincere.

5. Negativistic Attitude
Induce positive feelings about work and a good self image. (This isn't easy to accomplish. It requires continuing and intensive re-education.)

6. Tendency to Become Withdrawn
Continually draw child into action; aim questions at him specifically; talk louder, yell if necessary.

7. Lack of Visual Acuity
Screen his vision on Keystone Telebinocular; send to opthalmologist or optometrist if indicated; check lighting and position of desk; train to pay attention to details; use hidden-figures exercises; have him study pictures and tell details.

8. Lack of Auditory Acuity (basically a failure to distinguish figure-ground relationships among stimuli, to concentrate on relevant and important sounds)
Screen on audiometer; send to audiologist if so indicated; have pupil indicate

directions from which sounds come and types of sounds; require him to discriminate between pitches of tones; lower own voice to levels requiring very careful listening; seat near teacher and/or near center of work.

9. Lack of Ability to Sense Part-Whole Relationships (a component of #7 -- relates closely to language arts skills)
Provide abundance of exercises requiring discriminability and part-whole perception.

10. Need in Early Number Concept Experiences to Relate Abstracts to Real Objects or Physical Correlates
Use wood or plastic discs or cubes to induce early number concepts; pace sequencing slowly. Use structuring devices like form boards, hole boards, or peg boards.

11. Need for Structuring in Writing Readiness
Provide dotted lines for orientation points; indicate directions with arrows.

12. Need to Experience Much Imagery in Readiness Phase
Use flash cards with drawings of objects appropriate to later basic vocabulary to build images which word associations will later evoke or reinforce.

13. Tendency Often to be Oriented More Toward Auditory Modality Rather Than Visual One in Learning
Use oral approach maximally in early learning, gradually involving visual, tactual, and kinesthetic modalities more and more with time.

14. Deprived Communication Skills Due to Low Level Operations in Early Childhood Milieu, Incomplete Sentences, Much Colloquialism
Place the child in as many situations as possible where good communication levels are maintained. Use Peabody Language Kits or similar materials; require full sentences describing own home area and activities; encourage him to talk.

15. Poor Concept of Time, Difficulty with a Grasp of Meanings of Month, Six Months, Year, Etc.
Frame questions requiring a development of time sense. Have several old clock faces or cardboard clocks for ready use; use calendars; stress month sequences.

16. Limited Attention and/or Memory Span
Plan group exercises in which stories are told (pupil and teacher) with context so arranged that specific things must be recalled; play games where children have to perform a number of acts in sequence after pauses of 30-60 seconds.

17. Depressed Capacity to Decode, Integrate, and Encode Stimuli (stimulus-thought-response or neurological organization)
Design gross-motor and fine-motor exercises to insure crossover between hemispheres in the central nervous system. An adaptation of the Doman-Delacato patterning exercises has proved valuable. Maximize mental activity in a total way. Call on children often;

wait as long as is necessary for the pupil to organize a response.

18. Resistance to Ordinary Teaching Methods, Lack of Motivation for the Usual Ways
Involve color maximally for stimulation; use colored chalk, let pupils use colored crayon; raise and lower voice inflections and volume. Use any and all attention-getting mechanisms, especially educational TV learning experiences.

. . . . .

...my children know that we never say "I can't"....
Vertie E. Brown, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

I believe one of the most important things is my true feeling toward these children. I don't think of them as just a class I have to be with five and one half hours a day. I think of them as children I must help to be successful. I feel that it is my responsibility to help them, in every way possible. I know that I must let the children know by my actions, that I am interested in everything that has anything to do with them, both in school and out.

The first day of school, in September, I talked with the children and let them tell me why we are in school. We talked about the future and what they would like to be when they grew up.

I have found that children always want to be successful and be able to get a good job when they grow up. I tell the children that there is no reason for them not to be what they want to be, but they must prepare for this goal from the beginning of school and continue working toward that goal. I tell them about some children who live in their area that have been successful. My children know that we never say "I can't." We must always try and continue to try until we have done what we have tried to do.

We always make rules which we know we must follow for our classroom and school. Also, on the first day I get the addresses and phone numbers of each child. I take this list home and I frequently call the parents of my children, to let them know what we are doing. I don't wait for the child to do something bad. I call to report the nice things they do, also. Sometimes I call just to talk. The reason for this is, some parents of disadvantaged children want to know about their children, but can't always get out for different reasons. If the child doesn't have a phone, I try to go out to see the parent, if I feel that it will be profitable. I set up routines carefully. I let the children know what is expected. Standards are set within their reach and some times beyond and there are always quite a few children who can reach the higher standards.

Everybody in our room knows what they are to do and what to expect from the beginning of each day. My children know there is work for them the first thing in the morning. They know they are to take care of all of their needs at recess. If a child has a medical problem and has to be excused during school time, he must bring a note stating such.

I always have time to listen to the things my children have to say. They always get a chance to tell some of the things they enjoy on week-ends and holidays.

I can't sit and teach, I have to be with the children. I feel that it helps them if I am right there with them.

My children are told to always ask questions if they don't understand. Some children are shy and won't ask questions for fear of being laughted at. I let them know that my job is to explain if they don't understand. If they don't ask questions, then they can't learn what they don't understand. My children know I am there to help them and that I want to help them, therefore they always ask me to explain anything they don't understand.

We always drill and drill on everything that we work with. By doing this, most of the children master most subjects taught.

Even though these children are not working on grade level, I give them the things that are required for their grade, but I bring the work down to their level. By doing this, they are exposed to the things they are required to learn in their grade.

The children are always praised for the work they do. If mistakes are made I let them know that all of us make mistakes, but we will try not to make the same mistake again.

I let the children know how happy I am when they try hard. They know that I am happy when they do their best and they seem to like for me to be happy and praise them.

The children are taught that our classroom is our home for most of every day. I tell them that it is our responsibility to keep it like our home should be. When the children do something that they aren't supposed to, like throwing down paper, I remind them that this is their home away from home. We discuss manners and respect for others and they know that I expect them to practice whatever we discuss on good manners. My children are always happy to show our new classmates around. When a new child comes to our room, I introduce the child to the class and assign some volunteers to show the child the toilet, library, and other places he will need to learn.

I read stories, show film strips and discuss the accomplishments of people of their race. They know that there are many blacks who have started out with little, but didn't let that stop them. The children are encouraged to read and read. They are allowed to take supplementary books home. They know that they will have assignments from these books. The children are always excited when they have done this extra reading and are eager for the assignments they are to do.

I could continue writing some of the things that I do, which are effective, but it would take hours. I am always thinking of a new approach to my children.

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... attention to each small success....

Paul A. Josephson, Yonkers, New York

The following is a description of the program in which Ms. Geraldine Johnson and I are engaged. It is crucial to our success in effecting the learning of poor and minority group children.

Distar is a learning system based on carefully structured behavioral objectives. All the skills necessary to meet these objectives are presented in logical sequence. It involves keeping the children on target, maintaining motivation and interest, and eliminating behaviors that are incompatible with working on the assigned tasks.

The instruction is designed to help the teacher equip each child with the basic concepts and skills he will need to succeed in school.

The Method

The approach is warm but disciplined. It is the direct instruction approach.

It requires a far greater number of responses from each child than normally expected.

It programs the material so that the child works on the essentials needed for future tasks.

Techniques for grouping, acceleration and student motivation, as well as provisions for evaluation reinforcement and review have all been systematically built into the program.

The class is divided into small study groups of five to ten children according to present skills so that each child in a group works at the same skill level. The small group approach requires a teacher and two aides to handle a class of 25-30 children. Tasks are presented rapid fire. The teacher or trained aide addresses questions to individual children. Since no child knows when he will be asked a question, he must stay alert and ready to respond to all questions.

The model uses the Distar Reading, Arithmetic, and Language program.

All three programs are in use in grade one, the reading and language in grade two, and the reading program only, in grade three with the original pilot group.

The children spend two hours a day on core academic skills. The rest of the day is devoted to music, art, and other less structured learning.

A key element is behavior reinforcement. Teachers use enjoyable activities, praise, and other rewards to encourage desired patterns of behavior. The teacher ignores the temper tantrum, since attention could lead to repeated tantrums, and, instead pays attention to each small success.

The Engelmann team provides pre-service and in-service training for teachers and other staff both in the use of the curriculum materials and in the classroom management procedures for behavior and reinforcement.

. . . . .

... make them feel that they are important to themselves and to me ....
Mary Beth LaMear, St. Louis, Missouri

It is very difficult to list in a letter the things I say and do which I feel help me in working with my students. But here are some of them.

I think that perhaps the most important thing is to remember that they are children like any others. That is, they have feelings and emotions and need love and understanding.

As far as I am concerned, the main function of the teacher is to be firm but fair. This is not always easy. Many of the children are simply told to do things with no reason as to why. I feel that as long as they can see what you are doing and have some idea as to why you are doing it, you will have success with the children. So any decision you make should be fair and the children should understand to some extent why you did it.

Many of the children have not enjoyed school before. So, I feel it is part of my job to get them to see what school is for, and to show them that learning can be fun. I do this in several ways. I frequently have educational games for them to play. These are either store-bought or more often games that either my colleagues or I have made. While teaching, I allow a certain amount of freedom so that during the lesson the children can speak about things related to the subject, and sometimes things not related.

I also feel it is especially important to my children that there be a set schedule to follow. It doesn't have to be followed to the minute, but it does help if they know about what time you have a specific subject.

I also feel that the children need to be listened to by the teacher. Quite often when they come to school in the morning, they have something to tell you about what happened the night before. Often I may be the only person they feel they can talk to about it. I think they feel that they can talk to me because they know I will listen and not repeat it to others. If a pupil comes in upset, it is necessary that I talk to him or her before starting to teach the rest of the class. If you don't, that student's entire day will be wasted. Kindness and understanding on my part are most important.

I also feel that the children need to see that teachers can make mistakes and that everything I say may not always be right. This helps them to scrutinize what is being given them. So, if I make a mistake, I readily admit it. Then they see the teacher as a real person and not just as a teacher.

Quite often during the year I go out to recess with them and play ball or jump rope, etc. This gives me a closeness with them that I wouldn't have by just being in the classroom. Once more they see me as a real person and I feel this is important.

I also use praise quite a lot. Many times throughout the day I am telling them how well they are doing. I also keep a candy jar on my desk. When someone does an outstanding job they get a piece. My students are 13 and 14 so you see it works for any age elementary child.

I also have a program which has helped considerably in getting them to read books. When they have given me five book reports, either written or oral, they get a hamburger. You would be amazed at how much more reading they do.

I guess that with all of this I am saying, as a teacher I do things which will make them feel proud of themselves and feel that they are important to themselves and to me. Whatever they do, does matter.

. . . . .

... I am committed to an educational strategy of bilingual-bicultural education in all areas of curriculum ....

Lucille Gallegos, Compton, California

I use the following strategies to achieve the objectives of the Compton Bilingual program.

1. For Mexican-American children to whom Spanish is the mother tongue, they receive classroom instruction in Spanish with the help of bilingual instructional aides.
2. For Mexican-American children whose mother tongue is Spanish, classroom instruction is given in Spanish while English is concurrently taught primarily as an oral language by a colleague teacher in a team approach.

The classroom application of these strategies (plans or objectives) into tactics are as follows:

1. Readiness training in Spanish during the first school period.
2. Basic skills taught in Spanish comparable to conventional first grade instruction in English.
3. Coordinate bilingual technique to transfer the basic skills in English as determined by student readiness, pre and post test results of the past two years and demonstrated conceptual performance by individual student growth.

Since I use a phonetic approach to the teaching of reading and because Spanish is a phonetic language, I feel that reading mastery can be accomplished earlier in Spanish than in the more difficult English language. I can expect that my Spanish-speaking children taught in Spanish rather than in English will be able to use reading as a tool subject for learning subject matter earlier than the English-speaking children taught in English.

I feel that the earlier mastery of subject-matter content in Spanish will provide Spanish-speaking children with an educational advantage to compensate for the delay in their use of English as a tool for learning subject matter.

As a part of my professional responsibility to the Compton Unified School District, I feel that native speakers of English who live in an area with many speakers of another language also must be prepared to live in the bilingual and bicultural community. As part of my overall classroom strategy, I teach the non-Spanish speaking student Spanish and give him the opportunity to become bilingual and to share the understanding and appreciation of the minority culture in this school district which can only be gained by learning its language.

My strategy is to give all children either native-English or Spanish speakers the opportunity to learn each other's language which will greatly enrich their intellectual development and will provide them with skills and insights which they can use later on in the community, in business, in education, in government or in international service.

. . . . .

... a dose of success every day....

Lucy Pike, Venice, California

This is a difficult assignment. I suppose I could start by saying my philosophy stands on the premise that each child needs a dose of success every day. This is true for every child, but it is especially true for the disadvantaged child who is often unsure of his worth, and consequently has a very low frustration level.

I am involved in a reading lab in which over 100 children have a completely individualized lesson every day. I try in every way I can for each child to graphically see his own progress as he "graduates" from skill to skill in the lab. I mark every small increment of growth on his test as we evaluate it individually together almost daily.

I also strive to respect every child's individuality, and to meet him person to person in a completely real and not artificial way. A teacher is either himself or not himself; is either rooted in his existence, or is a fabrication; has either found his "humanhood" or is still playing with masks and roles and status symbols. And nobody is more aware of this difference (although unconsciously) than a child.

Knowledge is not enough. Technique is not enough and mere experience is not enough. I think this is the heart of the teaching process, the ability to tune in to the other's wave length.

I am just now evaluating the reading level progress of the children who started in mid-November and find that every child has shown growth, and many have jumped one and two grade levels in approximately 3 1/2 months. I am thrilled and the children are too.

I am enclosing an explanation of the lab that we give to our many visitors.

Overview of Reading Laboratory

Children working in the lab are selected by teacher recommendation. A waiting list has been established from these recommendations to replace children who move away or no longer need the services of the reading lab.

The day is divided into four 50 - 60 minute periods. There are approximately 25 to 30 children in each group. Each child comes daily at the same time for instruction. Children from grades 3-6 come to the lab.

Each child is given a comprehensive, individual diagnostic screening which covers various areas of the reading skills, sight vocabulary and reading level of the child. The information obtained from this screening is transferred to each child's individual program card. These cards are used as place cards in the lab. When a child comes to the lab he locates his program card, puts on his earphones, starts his cassette player and his individual lesson begins. Each child is taught the skill or skills that he needs. It is truly diagnostic-prescriptive teaching and the goals are clear and well defined.

In addition to the reading skill tapes there are many Scholastic paperback books on tape that the child may listen to while following the words in the book to give him vocabulary development, fluency and speed, and to increase his comprehension skills.

After the child has finished his tape lesson he may be assigned to work on a Sullivan programmed reader or a lesson from the SRA kit to increase his comprehension skills. Phonics puzzles, games, filmstrips with cassette tapes emphasizing word decoding skills and an

individualized reading library corner we also utilized.

The taped lessons are sequential and each child is regularly re-evaluated to insure progress.

Each child is also given a study cards packet to take home for additional study, and may check out scholastic paperbacks which are duplicates of those on the tapes.

Objectives of the Program

To help each child obtain the basic reading skills in the following areas:

1. Letter recognition
2. Phoneme-grapheme correspondence
   a. initial and final consonant sounds
   b. digraphs and blends
   c. long and short vowel sounds
3. Structural Analysis
   a. prefixes, suffixes and inflectional endings
   b. compound words
4. Dictionary Skills
5. Basic sight vocabulary
6. Comprehension Skills

. . . . .

... our amazing, bewildering, mysterious, fantastic, beautiful world ...
Edith L. Geiger, Buffalo, New York

Our school community is considered to be a fringe area as we have children from both middle and lower class socio-economic groups. The school enrollment is comprised of Puerto Ricans, Indians, Negroes, Italians, and a scattering of various other groups.

In answer to your request for a detailed report concerning the strategies which are used in our classroom to achieve the objectives of our program, I think it might be well to take you with me through our morning.

We move rather quickly from one activity to another, both to keep the children interested and to heighten their learning experience. Moving quickly from activity to activity and keeping the children busy helps to keep discipline problems at a minimum.

Many educators are finding that children at the early childhood level are capable of doing and understanding far more than had been hitherto believed possible, so in our class we try numerous things that stimulate the children's minds and broaden their educational experience.

We have a routine which we follow every day. Children thrive on a routine. It gives them security. We, however, have a great variety and freedom in our activities, and an easy flexibility within the framework of our routine.

We do not start our day with free play. I think we can keep a higher level of activities if we start the day by taking a cue from a situation which practically dictates what we should do.

When my aide and I greetthe children as they come into class each morning, we find that they are bubbling over with things to tell us. They are also busy chatting with the other children as they come in the door. So, to me, it seems we should take advantage of all this warm enthusiasm, and seize the opportunity to develop their conversational skill when it is at a peak. They have something important, to them, to offer. It isn't the idle chit-chat that comes later in the morning.

So, after we start our day with the playing of the Star Spangled Banner, over the loud speaker, we sit on the circle and everyone bubbles with the excitement of telling his own special news, or something he is going to do, or something a member of his family did, or something he saw on the way to school. These tid-bits give endless opportunities to develop conversational skills.

Very often children bring things to school that they want everyone to see. I don't ask them to bring anything, they just bring things with them as all children delight in doing. This sharing of their possessions helps overcome shyness. If a child brings something to class he goes around the circle and shows each child, and talks about his possession, and lets the children feel and handle whatever he has brought. This serves several purposes. First, the child's pride of possession. Then, if it is soft, furry, hard, rough, smooth, etc., it gives the children a fine tactile experience. Then too, when a child brings a toy or other object, and another child has a similar toy or object at home, there is more conversation as this other child excitedly tells about his toy etc.

Many people who have visited our class have mentioned the fact that the children are very verbal. I think it is this type of thing that has helped to make them so.

There is another reason why I like to start our day together on the circle. It is our school family and there is a warmth in our chatting together, and a feeling of oneness which I think the children like. It is our school home, and I want the children to feel that warmth and security.

Now it is time for a change and we must find out who is present. Sometimes I hold up their names, and they say,"That's my name." Sometimes I just call of their names and they say, "Here I am." I call the "ladies" first sometimes, and the "gentlemen" first other times. Quite often I call them by their last names i.e. Mr. Perez, Mr. Gonzalez, Mr. Abdel Hai, Miss Caligiuri, etc., so that they will be completely familiar with their names. It helps to develop an image of "self". "This is my name. I am special. Noone else has my name."

Sometimes I sing the child's name at a certain pitch, and the child sings, "Here I am", back to me on the same pitch. This is a good listening exercise for him as it teaches him to listen carefully to sounds, in order to be able to produce the same pitch.

Sometimes I toss a ball to a child and when he catches it, he gives his name and tosses the ball back, and we continue in the same manner as each child gives his name.

Sometimes we take their lettered names and spread them around on the tables and have each child find his name and bring it back to the circle and hold it in front of him.

The children know that we have eleven boys and seven girls in our class, so when we are finding out who is present we use the boys and girls themselves as a basis for some arithmetic. Sometimes we have one child count the boys and another count the girls, and still another count everyone by walking in back of each child and tapping him on the head as he counts up to the number present. Then we clap as we count up to the number of children who are there.

Sometimes I have the children count off with the first child saying one, the next saying two, etc. I try various ways so nothing gets into a rut, and we have new approaches all the time to the things we do.

If any of the children are absent we figure out how many are present. If someone comes late we add him to the total figure.

It is now time to talk about what kind of a day it is -- sunny, cloudy, rainy, snowy, etc. on our weather calendar. In this way we are always aware of the weather and anything that needs to be discussed concerning it -- where it comes from and why it is the way it is.

The weather chalendar also helps prepare the children for reading, as the days move from left to right, and move down the calendar, row by row.

Sometimes, for our opening activites, I appoint a child to sit in my chair on the circle. I give the child the attendance book, and he takes over completely, calling the names of the children, or having them respond when he holds up their names. The child gives all directions, and takes care of having the children counted, the weather calendar, and anything else that would come up during our opening activities. I think it is good for a child to have this experience. And not only that -- most children like to play school, and this is for real. On one occasion I let a little girl take charge of the class for a whole morning and she did a beautiful job. These kinds of things give a child a tremendous feeling of his own worth, and it is fun besides.

We move next into a little science and nature. You may think that the things I have mentioned so far must have taken a great chunk out of our morning, but in reality they haven't. We pace things carefully and move right along, and our opening activities take, roughly, around 10 or 15 minutes.

I like to go into the science and nature after our opening activities because, if I have brought any unusual animal or creatures, it gives us time to talk about them and still have most of the morning for the children to become better acquainted with them. I also like to present things in science and nature before the children become tired from our energetic work-play period. The children like to see nature's many wonders and they like the little science experiments, which they refer to as my tricks.

Children are naturally curious, and they like to explore the many things around them, and are filled with questions about why things are the way they are. I feel that if a child learns to appreciate the wonders of this world, he grows up with fewer tensions, for he looks outward instead of inward.

In talking about science with these little folks, I do not burst upon them with assorted facts, for they would find that too much. I like to let them look at what I have, and let them wonder a bit, and then, whenever possible, let their curiosity cause them to ask questions. I hope that the acts that I add, whet their appetites further, so they will find endless joy in exploring the world around them.

I hope that our look at nature will help these children to understand, more fully nature's wonders, and develop in them a reverence for all life, and that they will grow to realize that they, too, are a part of nature, and that all they do is governed by nature's laws.

There are endless things to talk about and explore. A child of this age can learn about insects of various kinds -- ants, wasps, bees, dragon flies, praying mantis and many beetles. He can be taught to recognize an insect by its six legs and the three parts of its body. He can also learn that a spider is not an insect, as it has eight legs and two parts to its body.

Insects, their societies and ways are extremely fascinating. If a bug crawls or flies into our room, we cover it with a wide mounted jar and study it together. Many excellent science lessons come into a classroom unannounced.

A very interesting experience can be had by watching meal worms as they go through the transformation from larvae to darkling beetles. The metamorphosis is magic to children.

The woods offer so many things that can be used in class. We have used mosses, ferns, flowering plants, beautiful weeds, squawberries, and fungi of various types including the lovely polypores, and shelf fungus on which the children have sketched designs.

Trees are very interesting to study. It is fun for the children to count the rings in a log to find out how old the tree was when it was cut down. It is also fun to read the history of those rings. It is possible to find out which were the good growing years, and also the way the tree was facing (the side toward the sun). The bark makes for a wonderful study of textures, rough and smooth. And then there are those beautiful evergreens with their pine cones of many sizes and shapes.

We use our terrarium for exciting things. We had a layer of woods soil in winter that produced fantastic plants and weeds. We have had a layer of earth from a meadow with a wild strawberry plant, plantain, field weeds and a spittle bug. We now have mosses and squawberry plants in our terrarium along with a land snail, and a crane fly which has developed in the soil.

I n the spring we plant seeds in dirt filled cartons. Each child has his own carton in which he plants either tomato, marigold, nasturium or zinnia seeds. Each child takes care of his own carton, watching the seeds sprout and grow into fine little plants. The children take their plants home at planting time and continue to watch them grow in their gardens or some plot of ground. Very often, in the fall, the children come back into our room, proudly, to show us their tomatoes and flowers. It is a joyful experience for these little folks.

The children have taken begonia clippings and put them in water to watch the roots develop, after which they plant the clippings in a pot of soil. Each child cares for his own plant and takes it home when it is big enough.

We have planted deserted bird's nests to find out what kinds of weeds are used by birds to build their nests. There are many seeds in birds' nests.

In the fall we have a little milkweed ceremony outside, where we let the wind take the milkweed fluff and seed to plant the seed somewhere, maybe nearby or maybe far, far away. The children like to toss the beautiful fluff into the air.

I have brought in rocks, stones and fossils to arouse interest and curiosity. I urge the children to bring to school any pretty or unusual rocks that they find.

We have made molds and bacteria cultures from fingerprints, fingernail clippings, hair, a cough, etc. Through this the children learn that they should not put their fingers in their mouth.

We have had many animals in our classroom from time to time. Our New Zealand bunny has been a part of the program from the beginning. We have also had in our class in the past few years:

Guinea pigs: Two mothers with their litters so children could see that animals have families too, and also see how a mother animal cares for her little ones even as their (human) mother cares for them. A father and mother and three young so children could see a complete animal family unit.

Gerbils: We also have had baby gerbils so the children could understand more about animal families.

Siamese rabbit
Young squirrel
Quaker parrot
Bee-Bee parrot

Cockatiel
Baby robins
Cowbirds
Tadpoles, frogs, toads, salamanders
Woolly-bears
Butterflies
Spiders
Ducks (mallards and Peking) from 3 days old until fully grown
Iguana
Tegu lizard
Snakes (garter and boa constrictor)

I bring snakes to class so the children will not have fear of them as do many adults. The children learn snake facts and pet the snake.

Roosters

This spring we raised two roosters. We had them from the time they were a week old. When they were seven weeks old and a good size, we sent them to live at a farm. The children watched the development of these roosters with great interest.

I invited the superintendent of the Children's Zoo to visit us. We asked the lower grades of the school to hear him narrate a film. He brought an eight-week-old Barbados sheep with him which the children enjoyed.

In science we have done experiments with air pressure, balance, sound, magnets, static electricitiy, bacteria, chemical magic, gases, and other odds and ends that delight children.

I borrowed a microscope from the sixth grade so the children can see the teeny world. They enjoy seeing rotifers, leaves, hair, crystals, etc. The microscope is set up so the children can look through it anytime during the morning.

When we were talking about sound, we tried something very simple that the children liked. We took to the hall and went eaves dropping on all sounds we could hear. We stood outside of doors and listened to the sounds we could hear in the classrooms. We went into the office and had the office girls and principal run some of the machines for us so we could hear the sounds they made. Wherever we heard a sound we went to find out what was making it, and we learned a great deal about various sounds and what made them. Discovering sounds for themselves was learning fun for the children.

There is so much to do in nature and science that no one should have any trouble finding exciting things for children of any age to do.

After our science-nature activity (usually about five minutes) we go into our free play or work-play time. This is the time in which we use the abundant equipment provided for the Early Push program. I also bring in other things that I think will help the children in their creative and learning experiences. The children choose activities according to their own desires. We have a block area, housekeeping corner, a place in which the children can play with educational toys and look at books, and a large area devoted to art creativity.

We have growing things on window sills, and other things of nature placed where children can observe them whenever they like. A cage for animals is on the floor where children can reach in and pet the animals, or on occasion take them out and hold them.

We work with children singly or in small groups according to the situation, and whether or not they need assistance. The educational toys are very useful in learning experiences. We work with the children only if they have difficulties, or if our intervention will help to improve the experience. If a child or children would like to hear a story, an adult will read one.

The planting of clippings and seeds, and the caring for plants etc., is done during this work-play period. The children enjoy the responsibility of maintaining the right conditions for the proper growth of their plants.

We do a great deal of art work in our room. The children are always free to use crayons, magic markers, paper of their choosing, the easel etc., but besides that we have a special art technique available, sometimes two or three, each day. Having art every day helps the children's creative spirit. It thrives. I keep the children's best work in their folders (which they get at the end of the year), and let them take their other art work home.

Children thoroughly enjoy playing with boxes, so we have, whenever possible, boxes into which they crawl, jump, and climb. The youngsters also build with them and push them around.

We have a sand box in which the children play and build. They are allowed to take off their shoes and socks and walk in the sand box if they like. It is a good tactile experience.

We have group projects which have proven to be very enjoyable.

For Halloween we have made such things as a very large paper mache pumpkin on a wire frame, and also a monstrous paper mache spider on a wire frame. We have made spider webs of yarn and spiders of styrofoam. As the children made the webs, we talked about why a spider doesn't get caught in his own web.

In November we have an Indian project with Indian drums, wampum, head dresses and a six-foot high teepee. We sing and dance and have a wonderful time.

One of our most exciting projects is the house we build. We have built them in the summer and winter sessions. The children hammer the nails into the boards with great enthusiasm. When finished, the house is about 5 1/2 ' tall, 6' long, and 4' wide. The children decide on a color for the house, and they all paint with vigor. I remember one class singing songs as they were painting the roof. It came about spontaneously and it was delightful.

After the house is finished, the children play in it, so it seems to me to be a worthwhile project. It is great for hand-eye coordination, language development, and the confidence the children gain from being able to use the tools and build something of worth.

Last year we built a store counter which was another great experience in hammering. Using the store is excellent for language development, numbers, words, use of money, and the shopping experience.

We had excellent cooperation from the parents. I asked if they would please open the cans they used, from the bottom, so we could have cans with labels for our store, and also milk cartons, egg boxes, cereal boxes and anything else they might have. We had a tremendous response and received an abundance of supplies.

The store and the housekeeping corner work hand in hand. The children go shopping and take the items to the housekeeping corner, put the items in the toy refrigerator or cupboard, and then use them in a very realistic way as they play house. It has added another dimension to the home center.

The end of our work-play time is signaled by the playing of the clean-up song on the piano. The children put the toys away, wash the tables, sweep the floor, and mop it where and if it is necessary. There are children who are not permitted to wash dishes or play in water at home, and they happily wash out brushes and scrub paint dishes in our sink. The children take pride in their ability to do a fine clean-up job.

When things are all put away and the room is straightened up, I play a jumping song and the children know it is time for our exercises, and head to the center of the room and start jumping in rhythm. We exercise every day, for a change of pace, to use up any excess energy, and for health reasons. We exercise for about five or seven minutes. We use the following kinds of exercises, all to piano music:

Skipping
Hopping on one foot
Running in place
Jumping and clapping our hands over our head
Twisting from the waist
Bending over and touching the floor without bending our knees
Balancing on one foot
Hopping, and falling each time the music stops
Rolling on the floor
Crawling on hands and knees
Walking on all fours
Walking like a duck, hopping like a kangaroo, flying like a bird
Push-ups
Legs up straight while lying on their backs
Scissors kick
Somersaults
Rocking
Rocking backwards and touching floor with feet
Slithering like snake
Etc.

Some days we do exercises designed by the children, and some days we go to the gym where we play games and run freely. The project provides equipment on which the children can ride and climb, so on some occasions we take it into thegym where we have plenty of room for its usage.

After our exercises, while the children are catching their breath, I have them gather around me or sit on the circle, depending on what we are going to do. I use about five minutes or so, each day, for an endless variety of things to develop their thinking, memory and observational skills. They enjoy doing the many things that are possible along this line:

I like to hold up pictures that have been cut and pasted on construction paper. The children look at a picture for a few seconds. Then I turn it over and ask something about it, such as: "What was in the picture?" or "How many things did you see?" or "What colors did you see?" etc.

I do it rapidly, like a game. The children have to be alert.

I have some pictures of cars in various positions. I have the children look at them and tell me where they would have to be to see a car looking as it does (at the side, in front, in back, on top etc.)

The children enjoy the pictures of four objects with three that are similar and one that is different. After the children look at them for a few seconds I turn the picture over and the children name the object that doesn't belong in the group.

Sometimes we make up stories with the children adding parts here and there.

Tongue twisters are fun: Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers. Sister Susie's sewing shirts for soldiers.

Children can act out: tying shoes, brushing teeth, opening a milk carton and drinking milk from a straw, or catching or hitting a ball, riding a bicycle, jumping rope, or getting ready for school.

Sometimes I say several words, then repeat them and leave one out, and see if the children can find which one it is.

I also name five items and put one in that doesn't belong and see if the children can discover it, i.e., banana, orange, mustard and grapes.

We often have the children close their eyes and listen to the environmental sounds (We close our eyes and open our ears). After about three minutes we open our eyes and the children tell what they have heard.

Sometimes I ask which sounds are: soft, loud, sneakers, rubber boots, bedroom slippers, milk truck, ice cream truck, fire-engine, feather, tinkle bell, door-bell

We have taken walks with numbers in mind. We read house numbers, read the numbers on license plates, and read the numbers in store windows.

In class I like to clap five times and have the children repeat it after me. They have to listen to do it. Then I like to ask how many times I clapped. I vary the times clapped.

We talk about things that come in pairs like: eyes, ear, socks, mittens, shoes, etc.

Sometimes I ask what happens when you drop certain things on the floor, such as: a ball, wood, a marble, a cookie, and milk.

There are many things of this type about which I have the children think. Children must be encouraged to observe and think. It helps them to tackle the problems of everyday living.

During this time we also work on colors, shapes, numbers and letters, (in our work-play period we may work on these with individual children in connection with the educational toys they are using).

After this short period devoted to observing, doing, and thinking, we proceed to snack time. A child is chosen each day to call his classmates, individually, to the table. Each child enjoys being chosen to call the rest of the children. It gives him a sense of importance.

We sing a grace before we eat, and have a quiet snack with the children engaging in friendly conversation. In the beginning of the school year, we often have youngsters who have very poor table manners, in fact, some find it difficult to sit at the table. Some appear to have home situations in which they grab something from a table and run off to eat it elsewhere, perhaps in front of a television set. We start very early in the year to talk about good manners. As the year progresses, there is a vast improvement in table manners, with "please" and "thank you" being used with ease. The children are praised for their fine table manners and take pride in eating nicely.

When we are finished with our snack time and have disposed of our cups, napkins, plates, etc., we have rest time. The children lie on rugs and rest while I play music of the masters on the piano. I play music that is suitable for these little folks. On occasions, I use symphony recordings. I like to have the children hear good music, as many of them do not have any other opportunity.

Sometimes we let our bunny out to hop from child to child while the music is being played. The children pet him as he hops onto their rugs.

When rest time is over I may say, "If your name starts like this (letter sound), put your rug away."

Some other times, I may say, "If you have anything on that's red, etc., put your rug away."

Then sometimes I may say, "If you have blue eyes etc., put your rug away."

Or sometimes we have a competition between boys and girls to see who puts rugs away in the quietest way.

Then it is music time.

We sing and play our instruments for about twenty minutes a day, and we have a glorious time. We sing a great number of songs in a year (seasonal and otherwise). We learn around 115 or so songs, and play all sorts of combinations of instruments, both homemade and commercial rhythm band instruments. We have lots of fun with the various instruments, and if anyone drops in to visit us, they are invited to play along with us.

Besides singing a song for the sake of singing it, singing helps with speech therapy. One uses all the letters of the alphabet when singing, but through singing one emphasizes the letters differently.

The children learn to hum and whistle. They also make up songs, and sing solos. We have many volunteer performers.

On occasion we have a musical treat. We invite musicians to demonstrate their instruments for us. After the guests demonstrate their instruments, we sing songs and they play the songs with us, and/or we get out our instruments and they play along with us. It's a great experience for the children. I hope that as a result of this early exposure to good music, they will want to play an instrument as they grow older, perhaps like one they have heard while in Early Push. At least, I hope they will want to continue to make music a part of their lives.

And now it is story-time.

I read some stories and my aide reads some. If any visitors come to our class I ask if they will please read to us a story of their choosing. I think a variety of story-tellers is good for the children. Everyone has a different way of reading a story, and this adds new color to story-time.

Something that is fun to do is to take a familiar story, and change it as much as possible, and watch the children's reactions. You no sooner start and they are right in there correcting you. It keeps them on their toes, and they sit like little vultures ready to jump on you for every mistake. They love it.

To finish our morning we have a game, unless for some reason, time runs out. Then with the children putting on their wraps, our morning is over and we cheerily say "goodbye".

We have fine parent participation in our class. We have coffee ready for parents, if they care to have any when they bring their children to class in the morning, or stay to visit. We encourage parents to visit as often as they can, and while visiting they may enter into any activity in which they care to participate. We have a very relaxed and warm relationship with the parents.

We have an art exhibit down through the main hall of the school each spring, and invite parents and friends of Early Push to see the artistry of these little folks. The talents of the very young are amazing.

The last few weeks of school we have Pet Days. I tell the children that they can bring their pets, but to have their mother or father, or both, come to school with the pet so if it is a dog or cat the parent can take it home after the child shows his pet and talks about it. If a child has a bird or turtle or such, this pet can remain in school for the morning. I assign one pet a morning, so each child who has one can have the joy of showing off his pet without any competition from anyone else's pet. The children enjoy these Pet Days very much.

We have a wonderful time in our class, and are always trying new approaches to learning about our amazing, bewildering, mysterious, fantastic, beautiful world. We try to develop a healthy self-image in each child by helping him realize that he is a very important individual. We try to develop his emotional growth through warm relationships with adults and classmates. We encourage self-expression and creativity, verbal communication, and social interaction, and try to bring out the best in every child.

CONCLUSION

The richness of the perceptions, skills and understanding demonstrated in these letters makes it impossible to easily summarize what has been said. That they are dedicated and effective teachers in schools serving environmentally less favored children is patent. The task ahead is to provide all children with such good teachers--since we believe teachers do make a difference.